

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Today Representative Xavier Becerra, (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and member of the Budget and Ways and Means Committees, issued the following statement regarding the details of President Obama's budget plan:

"President Obama has made it clear to us that as Americans we must act responsibly as we work to move our country towards economic prosperity. I support the President's efforts to make our Federal budget a responsible, working document for the American people. The President and Congress are united in our commitment to reduce fraud, waste and abuse, and to eliminate or improve programs that are not accomplishing their mission. I intend to carefully review the merits of all the President's proposals. Speaker Nancy Pelosi has also instructed House committee chairs to look at areas of possible savings in the departments and agencies under their jurisdiction."

One of the programs targeted for elimination by the Administration is the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP), which provides Federal assistance to States and localities that are incurring costs to incarcerate convicted criminal aliens. Last year, this program was funded at \$400 million. In place of SCAAP, it appears that the President will rely on a program called Secure Communities. Its purpose is to more effectively detain and deport removable criminal aliens from all US jails and prisons. If successful, this would relieve our states of the costly burden of prolonged detention and incarceration of criminal aliens. The President's budget proposes nearly \$200 million for Secure Communities- less than what the SCAAP program received in previous years.

"The Federal government has never lived up to its responsibility of addressing the flaws in our broken immigration system. SCAAP was never sufficiently funded to adequately reimburse states and local communities for the costs of incarcerating criminal aliens. Unless the Secure

Communities program provides fast-acting relief in the absence of SCAAP, the federal budget's savings in this area will come at the expense of our state and local governments.

"I am looking forward to hearing from the Administration on this and other of its budget proposals. I also take the latest news on SCAAP and Secure Communities as another sign that the President is serious about fulfilling his often-repeated promise to move forward on comprehensive immigration reform this year. Only through a comprehensive fix that results in tough, smart and sensible immigration policy will we finally control our borders and relieve our states and local authorities of the burden of unfunded federal immigration mandates."

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